

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1605

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HIWAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 9480

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, CH

SUBJ: PEKING'S REACTION TO TAIWAN-JAPAN AIRLINK ISSUE

REFS: A) TOKYO 9122; B) TOKYO 9285

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: DESPITE LIAO CHENG-CHIH'S HARSH CRITICISM OF FONMIN MIYAZAWA AND GOJ FOR FONMIN'S STATEMENT ON TAIWAN, ONLY OFFICIAL REACTION THUS FAR HAS BEEN LOW-KEY, PRO-FORMA PROTEST MADE DURING MEETING BETWEEN AMB. OGAWA AND VICE FONMIN HAN NIEN-LUNG. AT SAME TIME, PM MIKI DESPATCHED LDP DIETMAN UTSUNOMIYA TO PEKING WITH EXPLANATIONS AND REASSURANCES OF GOJ FIDELITY TO '72 COMMUNIQUE. ALTHOUGH RESULTS OF UTSUNOMIYA VISIT ARE STILL UNKNOWN, CHINESE OFFICIAL SILENCE IN PUBLIC ON ISSUE THUS FAR SEEMS GOOD OMEN TO FONOFF. END SUMMARY.

1. DESPITE CHINA-JAPAN FRIENDSHIP ASSN CHAIRMAN LIAO CHENG-CHIH'S
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HARSH CRITICISM OF GOJ FOR FONMIN MIYAZAWA'S MODIFIED STATEMENT

ABOUT TAIWAN, PEKING HAS SUBSEQUENTLY BEEN NOTABLY RESTRAINED REGARDING THE ISSUE BOTH IN PUBLIC AND IN PRIVATE CONTACTS WITH JAPANESE. FONOFF CHINA DIVDIR FUJITA TOLD US JULY 14 THAT AMB OGAWA CALLED ON PRC VICE FONMIN NAN NIEN-LUNG JULY 12 TO EXPLAIN GOJ'S ATTITUDE TOWARD RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. TO JAPANESE SURPRISE, HAN DID NOT BRING UP JAPAN'S AGREEMENT TO RESTORE AIRLINK WITH TAIWAN OR MIYAZAWA'S STATEMENT. WHEN OGAWA BROACHED SUBJECT, HAN RESPONDED, "AS LONG AS YOU BROUGHT THIS UP, THIS IS THE CHINESE POSITION". ALTHOUGH EXPRESSED IN Milder TONES, HAN TOOK SAME LINE LIAO CHENG-CHIH TOOK PUBLICLY WITH NIHON KEIZAI PRESIDENT JIRO ENJOI, THAT MIYAZAWA'S STATEMENT VIOLATED '72 COMMUNIQUE (REF B). OGAWA EXPLAINED GOJ'S POSITION AND GAVE HAN TRANSCRIPTS OF ALL PERTINENT DIET STATEMENTS MADE BY GOJ SINCE JANUARY, INCLUDING THE OFFENDING STATEMENTS MADE BY MIYAZAWA JUNE 10 AND JULY 1, AND ALSO MIYAZAWA'S COMMENTS TO FOREIGN PRESS CLUB JULY 10.

2. THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER COMMENT, OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE, ON THE ISSUE BY CHINESE, EITHER PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY. HOWEVER, PM MIKI DESPATCHED LDP DIETMAN TOKUMA UTSUNOMIYA TO PEKING JULY 11, PRESUMABLY WITH ASSURANCES OF MIKI'S FIDELITY TO THE '72 COMMUNIQUE AND HIS DESIRE TO CONTINUE TO WORK TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. UTSUNOMIYA'S VISIT PROVIDES CHINESE OCCASION TO FURTHER CASTIGATE THE GOJ ON THIS ISSUE, IF THEY WISH TO DO SO. RESULTS OF VISIT ARE OF COURSE NOT YET KNOWN BUT, EXCEPT FOR LIAO, CHINESE HAVE MAINTAINED THEIR SILENCE PUBLICLY. (FUJITA CONFESSED TO US THAT HE HAD LEARNED OF UTSUNOMIYA'S VISIT AFTER CABINET SECRETARY IDE TOLD PRESS JULY 11. HE PROTESTED TO PM MIKI'S PRIVATE SECRETARY).

3. COMMENT: LIAO'S PROTEST AND LOW-KEY MANNER IN WHICH HAN CRITICIZED JAPANESE FOR MIYAZAWA'S STATEMENT APPEAR PRO-FORMA. WHILE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CRITICISM STILL ARE AVAILABLE, IF UTSUNOMIYA VISIT PASSES WITHOUT ANOTHER BLAST, GOJ MAY HAVE MANAGED TO RESTORE MORE SATISFACTORY WORKING RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN WITHOUT SERIOUSLY DAMAGING RELATIONS WITH PEKING. NEVERTHELESS, EVEN IF PRESENT STORM BLOWS OVER, REAL CHINESE REACTION COULD LATER FORM OF RENEWED INSISTENCE ON A "TAIWAN CLAUSE" IN PEACE FRIENDSHIP TREATY AS RECOMPENSE FOR MIYAZAWA'S STATEMENT AND PROOF OF NO BACKSLIDING BY GOJ.

HODGSON

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